March/April 1994 Volume 19, Number 2

News for You

A summary of recent news stories from the University of California, San Francisco

UCSF

A New Generation of Lithotripters

Dawn Finch

Urology Center supervisor Ralf Jeworowski demonstrates the new lithotripter's shock head containing a balloon of water.

There has been much improvement in the treatment of kidney stones since the '80s. There no longer is the need for surgery nor a hospital stay, primarily due to the lithotripter. With lithotripsy, the patient sits in a large tub of water while the lithotripter sends shock waves through the water shattering the kidney stones so they are small enough to pass through the ureter and out of the body.

Now, a second generation of lithotripters is here, hailing the demise of the bathtub. The new machine, installed in the UCSF Urology Center, makes use of a shock head containing a large bulb of water. This head is positioned next to the patient's skin, and a medium (similar to what is used in ultrasound) is applied to the skin to create a direct contact between the shock head and skin. There is no need to sit in a bathtub.

Thanks to the absence of the tub, the equipment, particularly the table, lends itself to other work done at the Urology Center.

The equipment has an improved computer-assisted fluoroscopic guidance system, which means the X-rays can be directed from below, eliminating much of the exposure risk to health care workers. This accurate guidance system quickly identifies the stones. The shock waves then are aimed with ease at the stones with the help of a computer monitor.

Many of the more difficult kidney stone cases from around the Bay Area are referred to UCSF. Normally, physicians will see about 10 lithotripsy cases a week, although recently it has been much busier than usual.

For further information, call 476-8273.

Neurocutaneous Clinic Opens

A new Neurocutaneous Clinic has opened at UCSF which specializes in neurocutaneous disorders, a group of diseases characterized by skin manifestations, that also could involve the nervous system. The most common of these diseases is neuro-fibromatosis, sometimes called "Elephant Man's Disease," in which tumors grow along various types of nerves, often affecting the development of non-nervous tissue, such as bones or skin.

The second most common is tuberous sclerosis complex, characterized by epileptic seizures and varying degrees of mental retardation, and accompanied by benign tumors of the brain and frequently skin lesions.

These and other neurocutaneous disorders often affect multiple body systems, requiring the involvement of a variety of medical disciplines. In the past, many patients with these disorders have received care at UCSF, says clinic coordinator Siobhan Geary, but not in a coordinated fashion, as would best suit the complex diagnostic and follow-up needs of this population.

Early diagnosis is an essential component of effective management for these diseases, say neurosurgeon Michael Edwards, MD, and neurologist William Mobley, MD, co-directors of the clinic.

But the current feeling is that perhaps many cases go undiagnosed or misdiagnosed until there is an advanced state of the disease. Thus, community and physician education will be part of the agenda of the new clinic. The clinic also expects to be closely aligned with the respective foundations and associations connected with these diseases.

For further information or referrals, call 476-3338.

Wondrous Voyages

SCIENCE AND HEALTH FOR A NEW CENTURY

Public Symposium on April 27

A sea change in American health is under way. It is affecting how we treat and cure diseases and it is revealing, with some certainty, who will fall prey to others. It is forcing all of us — citizens, legislators, educators, scientists, health care providers alike — to confront complex health-related issues and to make difficult choices.

This change in large measure is driven by new knowledge from recent voyages of discovery into the cells and molecules of our bodies that have revealed how we actually can prevent and control disease. As a result, we know more now than ever about disease and health, and we are living longer, healthier lives. But our record in some areas is poor, for example infectious disease is on the rise, and our infant mortality rate remains distressingly high.

UCSF helps to bring the public face to face with this new age of discovery with a public forum called "Wondrous Voyages — Science & Health for a New Century," on Wednesday, April 27, at the Center for the Arts Theater at the new Yerba Buena Gardens.

From top researchers across the country, you will learn how far medicine has come, what it takes to make discoveries and what new hope these discoveries can bring.

Registration is $50 and must be completed by March 31. For 24-hour registration or program information, call 476-7082.

"Wondrous Voyages" is part of UCSF's Capital Campaign Kickoff and annual Founders Day. For a complete listing of events, see the inside calendar.

In Brief

Financial District Series to Explore Frontiers of Medicine

Some of UCSF's most distinguished medical researchers are offering a series of free public lectures in the city's Financial District to discuss the latest developments in understanding cancer, pain, and aging and in the use of computers to design new drugs. The lecture series, entitled "Exploring the Frontiers of Medicine," is sponsored by the Bay Area Bioscience Center and made possible by the support of Ernst & Young, Syntex Corp., and Heller, Ehrman, White & McAuliffe. Each lecture will take place from 12:30 to 1:30 p.m. in the Grand Ballroom of the Sheraton Palace Hotel, 2 New Montgomery Street. (See the inside calendar for the first lecture, to be held on Wednesday, March 2.)

UCSF/SFGH Affiliation — 100-Year-Old Partnership

As the country moves toward health care reform, including California's MediCal Managed Care Plan, UCSF and San Francisco General Hospital — recognized nationally for their joint leadership in AIDS, trauma and primary care for the underserved — have renewed their commitment to provide quality health care for the citizens of San Francisco. The UCSF and SFGH Affiliation Agreement officially describes and recognizes a partnership more than 100 years old. The two institutions last signed a formal Affiliation Agreement some 35 years ago, in 1959. Before it is official, the Affiliation Agreement must be signed by the SF Health Commission, the SF Board of Supervisors, the Mayor, and the UC Regents.

"Stand-Up Against Homelessness"

Enjoy a night of nationally prominent stand-up comedians on Monday, April 11, 7:30 p.m. at the Westin St. Francis Hotel's Grand Ballroom, and at the same time benefit a good cause.

Called "Stand-Up Against Homelessness," the event will benefit two health clinics for the homeless, which are run entirely by UCSF students. It is hoped that the proceeds from the event will help build an endowment to permanently sustain the two clinics.

Tickets at $50 each are available by writing Stand-Up Against Homelessness, c/o UCSF Department of Family & Community Medicine, 500 Parnassus Ave., MU 3 East, Box 0900, San Francisco, CA 94143-0900, or by calling 476-5581.

New Antiretroviral Study at SFGH Needs Participants

The first clinical trial of a combination of the two antiretroviral drugs ddI and d4T has begun Phase 1 testing at SFGH to see if this drug combination is safe for patients. Both drugs have been shown to work well together in laboratory tests to inhibit the replication of the AIDS virus, says Mark A. Jacobson, MD, who heads the study. To be eligible for the trial, participants must have between 200 and 500 CD4 cells and have never taken any antiretroviral drug such as AZT, ddI, ddC or d4T before. For further information, call Ted Bush at 476-9296, x84600.

More News for You

on the back page

What's happening

March/April 1994
A bimonthly calend
events at UC San F

Special Events

Sponsored by Millberry Arts & Performances unless otherwise noted. Call 476-2542.

Sun., Mar. 13
UCSF Orchestra Concert. Joined by L.A. Doctors' Orchestra for Mahler's Sixth Symphony & a new work by John Handy. $4/6/8. Lowell High School, 1101 Eucalyptus. 4 p.m.

Mon., Apr. 11
Stand-Up Against Homelessness. Nationally prominent comedians perform at this benefit for the UCSF Students' Homeless Health Project. $50. Grand Ballroom, Westin St. Francis Hotel. 7:30 p.m. Call 476-5581.

Mon., Apr. 11-Fri., May 20
The Festival of Active Living. A series of programs for older adults on health care, fitness & financial planning. Co-sponsored by UCSF/Mount Zion Inst. on Aging & Jewish Community Center. Call 292-1261.

Wed., Apr. 20
Music in the Library Concert Series. Classical & contemporary chamber music. Preceded by wine & cheese reception. Lange Reading Rm., 530 Parnassus. 5:30 p.m.

Fri.-Sun., Apr. 22-24
Parnassus Players Performance. Campus theater group performs a comedy. Toland Hall, 533 Parnassus. Call 476-6761.

Wed., Apr. 27
Wondrous Voyages — Science & Health for a New Century. A forum examining the role scientific knowledge plays in American health. Yerba Buena Cntr. for the Arts Theater. 9 a.m.-3:45 p.m. Call 476-7082. (See story on front page.)

Fri., Apr. 29
Vocal Chords Spring Concert. UCSF staff & student a cappella chorus performs. Millberry Conf. Cntr., 500 Parnassus. 8:30 p.m.

Institute of Healing Arts & Sciences

All talks are free and held on Fridays at noon in Rm. 721, Nursing Bldg., enter through 521 Parnassus. Call Marie Lehrer at 584-4416.

Mar. 4
The Callahan Techniques. Learn how to overcome stress, anger, cravings, sexual abuse & more. Followed by a seminar on Sat., Mar. 19, 9 a.m.- 5 p.m. $75. Call 892-0202 to pre-register.

Mar. 11
Victim No More. How self-care & community support allow victims of trauma to become more than survivors.

Mar. 18
A Call to Greatness — Transformation on an Individual & Global Level.

Mar. 25
Treat Your Own Back & Neck Pain.

Apr. 8
Zen Healing Massage Therapy.

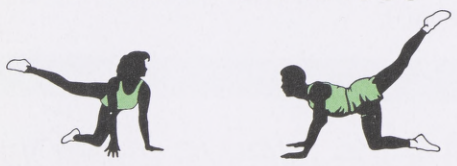
Apr. 15
Finding the Healer Within.

Apr. 22
Research Your Own Health Care: Consumer Medicine in the '90s.

Campus Tours

All tours are free and begin at 1 p.m. on Fridays. Meet in the lobby of Medical Sciences Bldg., 513 Parnassus. Sponsored by Campus Tours & Speakers Bureau. Call 476-4394.

Recreation & Fitness



Millberry Fitness Center now offers individual class or class series cards for any or all of the exercise classes offered. Registration for spring classes for the general public begins **Tues., Apr. 5.** Millberry Fitness Cntr., 500 Parnassus. Call 476-1115.

Women's History Month

"Women in Art & Science: The Paths to Excellence" is this year's theme for UCSF's Women's History Month celebration, co-sponsored by the Women's Resource Center and the groups noted below. Call 476-5836.

Thurs., Mar. 3
Seventh Annual Women's History Month Poetry Reading. Featuring Phoebe Grigg & other UCSF women poets. Toland Hall, 533 Parnassus. Noon-2 p.m.

Fri., Mar. 4
Plaza Pulse Noontime Concert Series. Featuring Tee Fee, a "zydacajun" & blues dance band. Co-sponsored by Millberry Arts & Performances. Plaza Grill, 500 Parnassus. Noon.

Tues., Mar. 8
An Evening with Jessica Mitford. A provocative analysis of birthing in America. Co-sponsored by UCSF Student Midwives Assn. $10-15. Cole Hall. 7-9 p.m.

Thurs., Mar. 10
Knocked Up. A commedia dell'arte presented by the S.F. Mime Troupe about a woman's right to choose. Co-sponsored by Millberry Arts & Performances. Toland Hall, 533 Parnassus. 7 p.m.

Sat., Mar. 12
Women's Health 2000. Symposium on the latest in women's health. Features UCSF faculty & other health experts. Sponsored by UCSF Ob/Gyn Research & Educ. Foundation. $45/half-day, $70/full-day session plus lunch. Millberry Conf. Cntr., 500 Parnassus. Call 591-9004.

Tues., Mar. 15
The Birth Dance: The Positions Women Assume for Birth When Women Have a Choice. Marina Aluzuaray, midwife, presents her research findings through dance & poetry. Co-sponsored by the UCSF Student Midwives Assn. Toland Hall, 533 Parnassus. Noon-1 p.m.

Wed., Mar. 16
How Great to Be a Woman. Marian C. Diamond on the beauty of choice in women's lives. Sponsored by Campus Tours/Speakers Bureau. Rm. 300, Health Sciences West, enter through 513 Parnassus. Noon-1 p.m.

Mon., Mar. 21
Women in Commerce: From Cottage to Corporate. Trade/Vendor fair. Sponsored by Millberry Arts & Performances. Millberry Conf. Cntr., 500 Parnassus. 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Followed by a seminar on Tues., Mar. 22 from noon to 2 p.m. in Rm. 125, Mission Cntr. Bldg., 1855 Folsom St., on starting a business.

Breast Cancer Screening

Women can have low-cost mammograms — X-rays to screen for breast cancer — from a mobile van that travels to convenient Bay Area locations. The procedure takes approximately 20 minutes and costs $60. Your physician's approval is required, plus his/her full name, address & telephone number to assure results are mailed promptly. Appointments must be made at least one month to six weeks in advance. Find out when the van will be in your neighborhood by calling 476-2193 between 9 a.m. and 3 p.m., Monday through Friday. A $60 mammography screening also is available at the UCSF/Mount Zion Medical Center Radiology Department. Call 885-7465.

Art Exhibits

Mar. 1-May 27
Drawings & Paintings by Kay Carlson. On display at the Faculty/Alumni House, 745 Parnassus. Open weekdays or by appointment. Opening reception for artist on Tues., Mar. 8, 5-7:30 p.m. Call 476-4723.

Hospitals Auxiliary Art Exhibit. On display in the lobby of Moffitt/Long Hospitals, 505 Parnassus, during March and April will be silk-screened wild flowers by Hisao Yokota, monoprints by Beth Katz and watercolors by Jean Lorenz. A portion of all proceeds benefits patients at the Medical Center at UCSF. To purchase art call 476-4906.

Financial District Bioscience Lectures

"Exploring the Frontiers of Medicine." A series of free public lectures featuring distinguished medical researchers from UCSF discussing the latest medical discoveries. Grand Ballroom, Sheraton Palace Hotel, 2 New Montgomery. 12:30-1:30 p.m.

Wed., Mar. 2
Computers & Biotech: Combining Forces to Combat Disease.

Outdoors Unlimited

Outdoors Unlimited is a cooperative resource center for outdoor recreation and adventure, serving both the UCSF campus and the general public. Call 476-2078 for a brochure.

Wed., Mar. 30
Adventure Summer Day Camp Registration. Parents may begin to register their children 6-12 years old for OU's two-week traveling day camp. Kids travel to Bay Area sites for guided explorations, hands-on tours, fun and games. The two-week sessions begin Mon., June 20. Call 476-0417.

Wed., Apr. 13-Wed., Apr. 20
Cross-Country Ski Equipment Sale. 40%-60% off local retail. 633 Parnassus, near 4th Ave. Call 476-2078.

Volunteer Orientation

Program to acquaint prospective volunteers with opportunities available in the Medical Center at UCSF in Langley Porter Psychiatric Institute Auditorium, 401 Parnassus (P), and at UCSF/Mount Zion in Herbst Hall, 1600 Divisadero (MZ). For further information call 476-1196 (P) or 885-7353 (MZ).

Tues., Mar. 8, 9 a.m.-noon. (P)
Tues., Mar. 8 & Apr. 5, 5-7:30 p.m. (MZ)
Tues., Mar. 22, 9-11:30 a.m. (MZ)
Tues., Mar. 22 & Apr. 12, 5:30-8:30 p.m. (P)
Tues., Apr. 19, 9:45-11:45 a.m. (MZ)

Cancer Referral Hotline

The UCSF Cancer Referral Service enables cancer patients to place just one telephone call and learn the names of UCSF doctors specializing in the kind of treatment they need. Call 1-800-888-8664.

Blood Donation

Tues., Apr. 12
Campus Blood Drive. Blood may be given at the Millberry Conference Center, 500 Parnassus. 8 a.m.-6 p.m.

You don't have to wait for a blood drive to give blood. You may donate any weekday, 10 a.m.-8 p.m., or Saturday, 10 a.m.-3 p.m., at UCSF's Blood Donor Center, Rm. 131 Long Hospital, 505 Parnassus. For information & appointments call 476-6989.

Brown Bag Lectures

A series of free lectures held weekly at noon on Wednesdays in Rm. 300, Health Sciences West, enter through 513 Parnassus (P); monthly on Thursdays in Rm. 125, UCSF-Mission Center Building (MCB), 1855 Folsom St.; and monthly on Tuesdays in Herbst Hall, UCSF/Mount Zion (MZ), 1600 Divisadero. Sponsored by Campus Tours & Speakers Bureau. Call 476-4394.

Mar. 2
Fear of the Dentist. Learn about relaxation, sedation & anesthetic options. (P)

Mar. 9
Pain & Distress in Babies. Learn how to provide comfort. (P)

Mar. 15
Health Issues of Menopause. (MZ)

Mar. 16
(See Women's History Month events.) (P)

Mar. 17
There Is No Magic. Quality health care begins with open and honest talk between provider and patient. (MCB)

Mar. 23
Your Bones & Osteoporosis. (P)

Mar. 30
Life After Shingles. (P)

Apr. 6
Mystery of Pain & Individuation. Exploring pain as a psychological transformer. (P)

Apr. 13
What the New Clinton Health Plan Means for You. (P)

Apr. 19
How to Preserve Your Estate. How to leave your estate to the people you choose. (MZ)

Apr. 20
Leader on the Spot. What you should do the first two hours after a major earthquake. (P)

Apr. 21
Facial Aesthetics Surgery: Turning Back the Hands of Time. (MCB)

Apr. 27
The Headache Hour. New treatments. (P)

Lakeside Senior Medical Center Talks

Free lectures held on Wednesdays at 10 a.m. at Lakeside Presbyterian Church, corner of Eucalyptus & 19th Ave., near Stonestown. Call 586-8600.

Mar. 9
What's Happening in Our Hospitals? Learn about hospital stays & discharge planning.

Mar. 23
X-rays, MRIs, etc.
Learn about these & other diagnostic tests.

Mar. 30
The Urban Gardener.

Senior Lecture Series

UCSF Medical Group/Seniority Plus presents the following free lectures on the second Monday of each month at 10 a.m. at various locations. Call 476-0373 for more information.

Mon., Mar. 14
Durable Power of Attorney for Health Care: What It Really Means. Lakeside Presbyterian Church, 19th Ave. & Eucalyptus.

Mon., Apr. 11
Memory & Aging. Learn about normal changes & discuss tips to improve memory. Herbst Hall, Mount Zion, 1600 Divisadero.

Look Good, Feel Better

This program provides expert advice on makeup, wigs & the use of turbans to people who have undergone chemotherapy or radiation and have lost or are losing their hair. Held the first Monday of each month in the 11 Long Solarium, Long Hospital, 505 Parnassus. Co-sponsored by the American Cancer Society and supported by the Donna Smith Fund. Call 476-1383.

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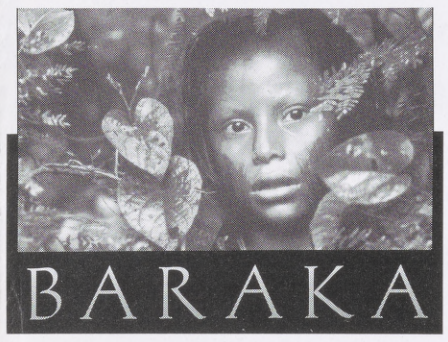
Cole Hall Cinema

Films are shown on Thursdays and Fridays in Cole Hall, enter through 513 Parnassus or 505 Parnassus. Prices run $2 to $3.50. Movies subject to change. Call 476-2542.



Mar. 3 at 5:45 & 8 p.m.
Mar. 4 at 6:30 & 8:45 p.m.
Baraka.

Mar. 31 at 5:45 & 8:30 p.m.
Apr. 1 at 6:30 & 8:45 p.m.
The Fugitive.

Apr. 7 at 5:45 & 8:45 p.m.
Apr. 8 at 6:30 & 9:30 p.m.
Joy Luck Club.

Apr. 14 at 5:30 & 9 p.m.
Apr. 15 at 6 & 9:30 p.m.
Short Cuts. (Note early start times.)

Apr. 21 at 5:45 & 8:15 p.m.
Apr. 22 at 6:30 & 9 p.m.
The Piano.

Apr. 28 at 5:45 & 8:15 p.m.
Apr. 29 at 6:30 & 9 p.m.
Philadelphia.

Women's Programs

Events sponsored by the Women's Resource Center, unless otherwise noted. Call 476-5222 for a complete schedule of March/April events.

Sat., Mar. 26
Self-Defense for Women. $35/65. Sponsored by Rape Prev. Educ. Prog. 10:30 a.m.-5:30 p.m. Millberry Union, Studio 2, 500 Parnassus. Call 476-5222 to pre-register.

Sat., Apr. 30
Conference: Breaking the Silence, Breaking the Cycle. Professionals learn about child abuse while survivors express themselves to promote healing. $25-$100. Co-sponsored by Rape Prev. Educ. Prog., RISK & Jacquiline Y. Coleman. 8 a.m.-5 p.m. Toland Hall, 533 Parnassus. Call 510-634-4902 or 408-554-1881 for more information.

Mount Zion Community Meetings

An ongoing series of meetings to keep the community apprised of activities of interest and to listen to neighborhood concerns. Held the fourth Tuesday of each month. Next meetings: Mar. 22 & Apr. 26. Herbst Hall, UCSF/Mount Zion. 7 p.m. Call 476-3206.

CPR Training

"Save A Heart" Program. CPR classes sponsored by UCSF CPR Center., Suite 370, UCSF/Laurel Heights, 3333 California St. Classes are from 9 a.m.-1 p.m. $20. For class schedule & registration call 476-1817.

CPR Road Show. Traveling CPR demonstration by volunteer instructors sponsored by the UCSF Center for Prehospital Research & Training. $25. Call 476-8502.

UCSF

University of California, San Francisco
Public Affairs
3333 California Street, Suite 103
San Francisco, CA 94143-0462

The orthopaedists treating Lorraine recommended amputation, but she wasn't ready to give up her leg.

"I felt something snap."

Lorraine Santos felt the snap in her ankle. It wasn't much. But she knew something had gone wrong.

Lorraine went to an orthopaedist, who diagnosed an ankle fracture and put a cast on her leg. A short time later, with the cast still on, Lorraine felt another snap.

An X-ray then revealed the problem. A benign tumor two inches in diameter had grown from the end of Lorraine's tibia at the ankle, so weakening this largest of the leg bones that it and the fibula (the smaller leg bone) fractured.

The orthopaedists treating Lorraine recommended amputation. But she resisted. At 75 years old, retired and living with her husband in San Francisco, she wasn't ready to give up on her leg. And so began her search for a better solution.

Thanks to a recommendation from her family doctor in early 1991, Lorraine eventually came to see David Lowenberg, an orthopaedic surgeon and director of the Problem Fracture and Limb Deformity Clinic at UCSF/Mount Zion. The clinic is noted for its skill in saving limbs by treating acute and chronic fractures, open fractures that do not heal, infected fractures, limb anomalies and deformities and other limb length problems. Like scores of other patients he already had treated successfully, Lowenberg told Lorraine he could help her without having to amputate, using a technique developed in the former Soviet Union over 40 years ago.

The technique, called the Ilizarov method, involves using a metal apparatus to induce bone to regenerate. The apparatus consists of rings that encircle the patient's limb and are held together with rods running parallel to the limb.

Paradoxically, Lowenberg had to break Lorraine's tibia and sever it just below the knee in order to save it. With the severed section of tibia now free from the thickest part that helps form the knee, Lowenberg attached metal wires to the detached portion and threaded them through tissue and skin to the rings of the Ilizarov apparatus. He also removed the tumor and broken bone from the lower tibia and fibula, leaving a two-inch gap.

After nine days in the hospital, Lorraine went home to begin the arduous task of healing. Every day, three times a day, for almost six months, Lorraine's husband used a crescent wrench to turn the nuts on the rings of the Ilizarov apparatus. The purpose was to slowly move the rings down the rods, and in so doing, move the tibia down the inside of Lorraine's leg. This progressed at about one millimeter a day.

This slow movement in effect tricked Lorraine's tibia into behaving like the bones of a child — that is, to perceive the gap as a "growth center." Bone grew to fill the tiny gap where Lowenberg had severed the tibia. In a manner of speaking, the Ilizarov apparatus constantly moved the goal post, inducing the bone to continue to grow.

All the bone couldn't grow back, however. So Lowenberg performed a second surgery. He took chips from Lorraine's pelvis bone and packed them in the remaining gap between the ankle and the tibia. (A metal pin was not used because of the risk of infection and the knowledge that, like all metal parts in the body, it would eventually fail.)

Lorraines' right leg is still about three-quarters of an inch shorter than the left one. A thick sole on her right shoe makes up the difference.

But her leg has completely healed, including the restored use of her ankle joint. Lorraine occasionally walks with a cane, but the cane is more for a sense of security than from any physical disability. As for Lorraine, she is ecstatic and emphatic about the outcome. "Dr. Lowenberg saved my leg."

— Marshall Krantz

(For more information about the Problem Fracture and Limb Deformity Clinic at UCSF/Mount Zion, call 885-7336.)

Tom Wachs

March/April 1994

To Our Neighbors

Taking Care of Kidney Stones Without the Bathtub

New Neurocutaneous Clinic Opens

Sex and Older Americans — Not as Safe as it Should Be

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More News for You

Some Older Americans Not Practicing Safe Sex

A national sex survey conducted by researcher Ron Stall, PhD, MPH, of the UCSF Center for AIDS Prevention Studies and the Department of Epidemiology & Biostatistics, shows that a small but important proportion of middle-aged and elderly Americans may be putting themselves and their partners at risk for AIDS.

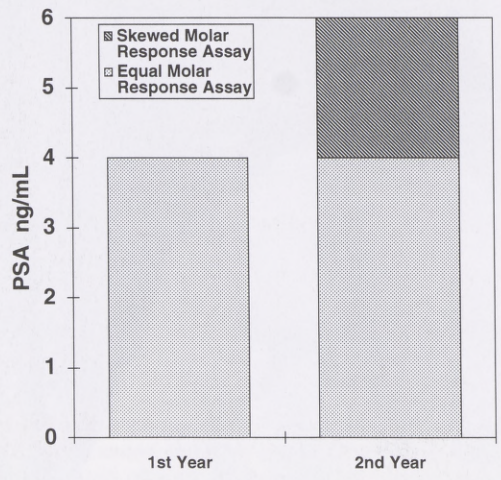
The UCSF study of some 3,200 predominantly heterosexual Americans over age 50 found about 10 percent had at least one risk factor for HIV infection. Within this "at risk" group, however, less than 7 percent have been tested for the AIDS virus, and 85 percent of those who are sexually active never use condoms.

The risks most noted were having multiple sexual partners, having a blood transfusion between 1978 and 1984 (excluding those who had tested negative for HIV), and having a risky partner (HIV-positive, injection drug user in the past five years, not monogamous, transfusion recipient or hemophiliac).

Compared to at-risk individuals in their 20s, at-risk Americans over 50 are one-sixth as likely to use condoms during sex and one-fifth as likely to have been tested for HIV, according to the study, which was published in the January 10 issue of the *Archives of Internal Medicine*.

Standardization of Prostate Cancer Screening Tests Urged

The commercially available screening tests for prostate cancer need to be standardized in order to avoid a missed diagnosis or a false positive result that could lead to unnecessary and costly procedures in patients, says UCSF physician Howard C.B. Graves, MD.



This graph shows a patient's test the first year to be within normal PSA range, while the second year — using a skewed response assay — shows the patient at risk for prostate cancer.

The tests now on the market screen for the presence of prostate-specific-antigen (PSA), a protein that is found in the bloodstream at increased levels when tumor cells are present in the prostate gland. Recent studies indicate that a rapidly rising level of PSA in the blood may be the earliest sign of prostate cancer, so monitoring PSA changes makes it possible to detect this common and potentially fatal cancer at a curable stage, says Graves.

Unfortunately, there are different tests for PSA which may give varying results on the same patient. Thus, if a patient is tested with one PSA test one year and a different PSA test the next year, the results may not be comparable, and doctors may get an inaccurate picture of whether cancer is present or not, Graves says.

That could mean the cancer may be missed altogether, he says. Doctors may suspect presence of a tumor where none exists, and patients will undergo costly and unnecessary diagnostic procedures, such as transrectal ultrasound or a prostate biopsy.

Two Studies for Women

- Post-menopausal women with mild osteoporosis are needed to participate in a four-year research project to examine the effectiveness of a non-hormonal medication to prevent and treat the condition. The UCSF Osteoporosis Program is recruiting women who are not taking estrogen, are at least five years after menopause, and between the ages of 65 and 85. Call 476-7352.
- Coronary artery disease will be the leading cause of death in American women who reach the age of 50 this decade. Investigators at the UCSF Reproductive Endocrine Research Center are conducting a study to determine certain risk factors, such as the effects of estrogens, progestins and androgens on cholesterol levels. Young and elderly women are needed. Call Saralyn Mark, MD, at 476-3228.

Demolition Begins

Demolition has begun at Mount Zion to make way for construction of two buildings needed to develop what could become the only National Cancer Institute–designated Comprehensive Cancer Center in Northern California. Since the Superior Court ruled in favor of UCSF's plans for a Comprehensive Cancer Center, the pending appeal by a neighborhood group is not expected to affect construction.

Center on Deafness Services for HIV Patients

If you are deaf or hard of hearing, plus have HIV or AIDS, the UC Center on Deafness can help. Through the Ryan White CARE Program — HIV Services, the Center can help make life for deaf people with HIV or AIDS more comfortable. Call 346-8327 (TTY) or 476-7980 (voice).